

7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

In accordance with section J.2.g of the Municipal Permit, public participation during the Carlsbad Watershed URMP development and implementation process will continue to be encouraged to ensure that stakeholder interests and creative solutions are considered. This direction follows the fourth objective (Objective #4) of the Carlsbad Watershed URMP, which is to encourage and enhance stakeholder involvement within the watershed.

Broad participation is important to the success, further development and implementation of the watershed program. While participating jurisdictions aim to improve coordination among their own agencies, the watershed approach calls upon these agencies to engage diverse stakeholders in this process, including other regulatory agencies, environmental groups, educational institutions, landowners, and private citizens. Further, the participating jurisdictions recognize that no single agency has the capacity to address water quality issues on its own and broad partnerships are essential to positively affect the water resources in our region. It is only through a collaborative approach, that we will develop a better understanding of the issues and processes affecting water quality in our watersheds and subsequently select and address priorities.

7.a. Public Participation To Date

The current watershed program, as described in this document, has been developed based on a set of model guidelines that were produced with public input. All San Diego Copermittees held a series of meetings which were open to the public and noticed through the County of San Diego Project Clean Water website beginning in early 2002. The County of San Diego and all other Copermittees via e-mail and personal communication also provided additional notice to numerous stakeholders. The County has provided leadership in outreach efforts by compiling a list of interested stakeholders that currently contains over 700 names. All other jurisdictions have also identified other stakeholders and submitted contact information to County staff for inclusion in their master distribution list. To further encourage public participation, related meeting agendas and minutes were also promptly made available through the County's website. Lastly, the model guidelines were also posted online in early August of 2002 along with contact information for each watershed.

To ensure further participation during program development, the draft watershed plans have also been made available for public review for a period of 21 days through the County's web site. Notice of their availability has taken place via e-mail communication (using the County's master distribution list) as well as through other numerous means, including announcements at public meetings and personal phone calls.

7.b. Future Public Participation

Other mechanisms identified to foster public participation include Copermittee collaboration and community workshops as well as integration and participation in local planning activities. The following mechanisms are being proposed and or pursued:

- Stormwater Copermittee Collaboration & Community Workshops;
- Integration and participation in local planning activities;

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- Project Clean Water;
- Other Public Mechanisms
 - Discretionary Project Review Process
 - Direct Interaction

Carlsbad Watershed Copermittees will also continue to pursue additional forums for public participation. Such forums include, collaborating with stakeholders on joint funding for watershed management plan development, as well as working with local community planning groups to integrate Watershed URMP activities.

7.c. Stormwater Copermittee Collaboration and Community Workshops

In order to further manage individual water bodies in the Carlsbad Watershed, many local agencies have begun the development of parallel projects that encourage public participation and complement the Carlsbad Watershed URMP.

- The Carlsbad Watershed Workgroup, which consists of representatives from the Cities of Carlsbad, Encinitas, Escondido, Oceanside, San Marcos, Solana Beach, Vista, and the County of San Diego, will collaborate on public participation activities, such as an annual beach and/or creek cleanup, attendance at the annual Earth Day Fair, and other regional events.
- The Carlsbad Watershed Network has developed the Carlsbad Watershed Management Plan. The stakeholders involved, which include public entities, private organizations and nonprofit groups, meet regularly to discuss water quality issues. On November 12th, 2002 the Copermittees introduced the Carlsbad Watershed URMP to the CWN stakeholders for review and comment. The Carlsbad Watershed Copermittees will continue to solicit input from the CWN stakeholders as the group continues to develop the watershed plan.
- As part of the City of Oceanside's effort to develop the Loma Alta Creek Watershed Management Plan, stakeholder forums will eventually be created to discuss watershed needs and concerns.
- The Escondido Creek Watershed Management Program includes an annual workshop that will be held to present updates, revisions, and/or solicit comments in order to actively engage stakeholders affected or potentially affected by the requirements of the Carlsbad Watershed URMP.

7.d. Integration and Participation in Local Planning Activities

Watershed planning has become an issue of increasing importance over the past few years. Various local watershed planning efforts provide forums for exploring both the development of watershed and jurisdictional activities and programs. The relationship of these efforts to the Watershed URMP development and implementation cannot be overstated since they address complementary objectives and all rely on public participation for success. Watershed management planning is multi-faceted in that it considers the correlation of many elements, including water quality and quantity, habitat and wetlands, and flood and fire management. Water quality can be used as an indicator of the health of the watershed. The Carlsbad Watershed URMP is another key element to the overall watershed management planning process.

When feasible, the Carlsbad Watershed Copermittees will participate in established workgroups and forums to ensure integration of Carlsbad Watershed URMP activities.

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While these projects are not always directed specifically at storm water permit compliance, they address complementary objectives and provide opportunities for consolidation of efforts and economies of scale. These activities and projects address objectives that are complimentary to storm water Permit compliance and provide a forum for the consideration of storm water and urban runoff issues during watershed plan development.

7.e. Project Clean Water

Project Clean Water, which was initiated in July 2000, established a framework for the broad-based and collaborative development of solutions to local water quality problems. The relationship of Project Clean Water objectives to Municipal Permit compliance is important. An underlying tenet of this effort is that Municipal Permit compliance alone cannot achieve clean water. As such, Project Clean Water seeks to actively involve a multitude of stakeholders in exploring water quality problems, their causes, and their solutions. This significantly broadens the base of stakeholder input available to consider issues directly related to Municipal Permit compliance. As with Copermittee meetings, all Project Clean Water meetings are open to the public and participation is encouraged through a variety of avenues including a website, electronic notifications and personal phone calls.

Project Clean Water is generally organized according to two types of working bodies, Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) and Technical Workgroups¹. TACs are responsible for the overall coordination and exploration of four broad subject areas crucial to water quality management: (1) Comprehensive Planning, (2) Legislative and Regulatory Issues, (3) Science and Technology, and (4) Education and Resource Development. Each TAC compiled a baseline inventory and initial assessment of activities and issues for its respective subject area during the first phase of the project and is now conducting a more intensive issues characterization and implementing specific action items identified in the June 2001 Clean Water Strategic Plan. Technical Workgroups generally explore more focused issues. During 2001, Technical Workgroups emphasized storm water permit compliance, and developed eight model program guidance documents and other work products intended to ensure public input during the development of these programs. Technical Workgroups will continue to deal with specific focused issues.

To provide information on meetings, work products, and other valuable links to the public and interested parties, a Project Clean Water website (www.projectcleanwater.org) was launched in January 2001. To date, interested parties have extensively utilized the site to post various work products for review and comment. It is the goal of the program to establish this site as a centralized source of water quality information for the San Diego region.

On November 25th, 2002, a draft copy of the Carlsbad Watershed URMP was placed on the website. Project Clean Water stakeholders were notified via e-mail and encouraged to review and comment on the document. Carlsbad Copermittees will continue to use Project Clean Water as a vehicle to update stakeholders and encourage feedback as we continue to develop and implement the Watershed URMP.

¹ During 2001, all Copermittees and SDRWQCB staff participated in one or more Project Clean Water TACs or Technical Workgroups.

7.f. Other Public Mechanisms

Watershed planning has become an issue of increasing importance over the past few years. Various local watershed-planning efforts provide forums for exploring both the development of watershed and jurisdictional activities and programs.

7.f.1 Discretionary Project Review Process

The public has the opportunity to comment on and to participate in hearings related to storm water compliance by proposed discretionary (development) projects. All such projects require some form of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance, with related public notice and comment opportunities. The consideration of projects by any hearing body involves public hearing and notification procedures.

7.f.2 Direct Interaction

In addition to those methods already described, the Carlsbad watershed Copermittees rely heavily on the interaction of their staff with members of the public during their job duties. Staff members with program implementation responsibilities will receive targeted training to increase their understanding of urban runoff issues as part of their Jurisdictional Urban Runoff Management Plans. The interaction of these staff with the public through various means (e.g., permitting, inspections, presentations, etc.) will provide an additional avenue for obtaining direct feedback from watershed stakeholders.